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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Contents for Week of April 30, 1934. Vol. XIII. No. 10.

1. Norwegian Fjord Swept by "Rock-Made" Waves.
2. Biggest Stratosphere Balloon Taking Shape in Akron.
3. Malta, England's Mediterranean Stepping Stone.
4. Saluting by Gunfire an Ancient Ceremony.
5. Tel Aviv, Palestine's All-Jewish "Boom City."

Photograph by G. Heurlin

RETRACING VIKING TRAILS IN THE FJORD COUNTRY

Far inland the tourist steamer winds through deep, rock-walled basins to the little town of Öye, near Geiranger Fjord, Norway. A few fortunate visitors ride in *stolkjaerrer*, but others must walk. Oye is southeast of Tafjord, scene of the recent rock slide (See Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Norwegian Fjord Swept by "Rock-Made" Waves

HUGE waves, set in motion by tons of falling rock, washed away two fishing hamlets and drowned more than 50 persons in Tafjord, western Norway, recently. It was one of Norway's worst disasters in half a century, recalling the similar Loen Lake tragedy in 1905, when 61 persons lost their lives.

Tafjord is a narrow, stone-ringed finger of water branching off from Storfjord, one of the dozen great arms of the sea that penetrate the heart of the Scandinavian peninsula.

Wildly picturesque, with bare red and brown cliffs rising almost sheer from black water, Tafjord is a typical example of these deep-water ravines, around the edge of which are generally thin fringes of pebbly beach. Along the beaches a few pine, birch, and elder trees and the toy-like, sod-roofed cottages of sturdy fishermen find precarious footing.

Torrents Plunge Over Cliffs

Tourists seldom visit the upper reaches of these deep, winding waterways, although they would be rewarded with some of the world's most unusual scenic spectacles if they did. From snow-clad mountain tops and ice-fields of the plateau, torrents rush to the cliff-tops, bursting over the rims and plunging headlong into the fjords like long ribbons of silver. When low-hanging fog banks obscure the brink of the cliffs, these dashing waterfalls, like ravelled clouds, seem to be dropping from the sky itself.

Tafjord possesses three high waterfalls, two of which come into view as the steamer enters the fjord. The largest, Muldalsfos, drops almost 500 feet (three times the height of Niagara), and is considered one of the finest waterfalls in Norway.

One reason why Tafjord has few contacts with the outside world is that it is practically inaccessible except by water. Only narrow bridle paths twist up the rocky walls of the fjord and over the plateau to neighboring villages, and these trails can be used only during the mid-summer months. The rest of the year they are blanketed in heavy snow.

Center of Cod-Fishing Industry

The villages of Tafjord and Fjoera, where the greatest loss of life occurred during the recent wave disaster, nestle in a cove at the head of the Fjord. Small steamers reach them only once or twice a week with mail and supplies, although many of the natives own fishing boats in which they sail some fifty miles down adjoining fjords to Aalesund, one of Norway's chief cod-fishing centers and the nearest large city.

The port of Aalesund occupies a few of the 150,000 islands known as the Skjaergaard (Skerry Guard), which fringe the mainland and increase Norway's coastline to 12,000 miles.

Practically the only other industry of the region, in addition to fishing, is mining. High on the face of a cliff above Tafjord a British company operates a mine which pours red ore down chutes to vessels waiting to take it to smelters in England.

In the nearby highlands, a little south of Tafjord, however, farmers find pasturage for small herds of cows and goats. In the summer months they drive

UMI

Photograph by Donald McLeish

MAKING "LEPSE," A NORWEGIAN DELICACY

This is a sweet bread flavored with aniseed, rolled very thin, and baked on an iron plate over an open fire until crisp. Back in the fjord country, far from the pastry shops and candy stores of the cities, the promise of a "lepse" treat is one certain way to make young Norwegian boys and girls behave (See Bulletin No. 1).

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Biggest Stratosphere Balloon Taking Shape in Akron

SQUARES and triangles of cloth, cording, patterns, piles of fabric—these and other materials make the assembly building of the Goodyear-Zeppelin Corporation of Akron, Ohio, look like Mother's sewing-room on a big scale.

The reason for this seeming confusion is that work on the world's largest free balloon in Akron has progressed beyond the laboratory stage to the practical processes of cutting and assembling the fabric of the huge envelope.

The balloon, which will be used in the National Geographic Society-Army Air Corps Stratosphere Flights later this year, is being built by the same concern that made the airships "Akron" and "Macon," and the 600,000 cubic-foot balloon used by Commander Settle in his stratosphere flight of last November.

Two Acres of Cloth Needed for Bag

The U. S. Army Air Corps has assigned two expert balloon officers—Major William E. Kepner, pilot, and Captain Albert W. Stevens, observer—to man the three million cubic-foot balloon (see illustration, next page), and to take aloft the gondola filled with delicate scientific instruments to the highest safe altitude, which is estimated to be 15 miles above sea level for this type of balloon.

Two-and-a-third acres of cotton fabric is being used in making the big envelope. Together with its necessary bands, ropes, valves, and other attachments, but not including the gondola, the huge bag will weigh slightly more than two-and-a-half tons.

The metal gondola, the crew of two men, instruments and equipment, and the ballast will bring the total weight to be lifted to nearly eight tons,—the equivalent of half a dozen large automobiles, or 32 bales of cotton.

The balloon will not be entirely filled out by its gas until it reaches its "ceiling" —the highest point to which it can rise. It will then be a great ball, 180 feet in diameter. Inside such a huge sphere, it would be possible to place an 11-story office building, with a width and depth as great as its height.

Tall and Tapering at Start

When the balloon rises from the earth, only partly inflated, it will be shaped like a gigantic exclamation point, with the round gondola representing the period. As the gondola leaves the ground, the top of the bag will be more than 300 feet above it—a height greater than that of a 27-story office building.

The balloon fabric will be impregnated with rubber. The spherical gondola with its freight of men, instruments and ballast, will be suspended from the balloon envelope by a system of ropes attached at 160 points around the bag. These suspension ropes will converge to a load ring, and from this ten supporting ropes will extend downward to the gondola.

Because of difficulties that have been encountered by balloonists in the past, owing to the jamming of valve ropes, and because of the impossibility of operating the ropes at high altitudes through the air-tight wall of the gondola, Captain Stevens has designed a novel safety system for operating the gas valve.

A small tube will connect the valve mechanism near the top of the bag with the inside of the gondola, and compressed air will be used to open and close the valve, just as a camera shutter is operated by squeezing a bulb, or the airbrake of a railway train by the pressing of a lever.

UMI

their livestock to these upland meadows and settle down in huts for two or three months of butter- and cheese-making.

Flowers and bright green grass often spring up at the very edge of huge glaciers and snow fields.

Riding the Stolkjaerre

Only a few miles southeast of Tafjord is another narrow finger of salt water that is sometimes visited by big cruise steamers. This is Geiranger Fjord, an S-shaped basin festooned with scores of leaping waterfalls. The inlet is only 11 miles long and from 200 to 400 yards wide, but the mountains soar straight up to heights of 3,000 and 5,000 feet along the gorge, and in some places actually overhang the water.

Liners visiting this fjord usually anchor long enough to permit tourists to go ashore at Merok village. At Öye, a hamlet near the mouth of Geiranger Fjord, shore parties may experience the thrill of riding in a *stolkjaerre*, a light, two-wheeled mountain cart which seats two passengers. (See illustration, page 1.) The driver perches on a small seat behind, and the reins pass between the passengers. The Norwegian fjord horse is an active, hardy little beast, drawing the *stolkjaerre* smartly along narrow, dusty roads to inland villages that possess many relics of Viking days.

Note: Students preparing units about Norway and Sweden will find color photographs, maps and other helpful data in "Norway, A Land of Stern Reality," *National Geographic Magazine*, July, 1930; "Sweden, Land of White Birch and White Coal," also "Granite City of the North (Stockholm)," October, 1928; "Norway and the Norwegians," June, 1924; "Geography and Some Explorers," March, 1924; "Sailing the Seven Seas in the Interest of Science," December, 1922; "Cathedrals of the Old and New World," July, 1922; "Weavers of the World," August, 1919; "The Races of Europe," December, 1918; "The War and Ocean Geography," September, 1918; and "How the World Is Fed," January, 1916.

See also: "The New Map of Europe," published by the National Geographic Society. Copies of this map can be obtained for 50 cents postpaid from the Washington, D. C., headquarters of The Society.

Bulletin No. 1, April 30, 1934.

Photograph by Lillian M. Svenson

A VIKING SHIP MORE THAN 1,000 YEARS OLD

Long before Christian nations carried on sea trade, sturdy Viking craft put forth from the Norwegian fjords and explored distant lands. Some of them even reached the shores of the New World. This ship, in a museum near Oslo, was so well preserved when found in 1903 that its timbers were steamed and bent back to their original shape. It was probably a pleasure boat used in quiet waters.

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Malta, England's Mediterranean Stepping Stone

FOR more than a century Malta has sheltered powerful British warships guarding sea lanes to Mediterranean ports, and, in more recent years, to India, Australia and the Far East via the Suez Canal.

Now it is to be a strong aërial base as well. Huge armed biplanes, with a non-stop flying range of 1,725 miles, are being substituted for small seaplanes in use at the island. The new flying boats are the largest yet built for the Royal Air Force.

Malta deserves attention, however, for other than military or strategic reasons. On the little island an ancient race still lives and speaks an otherwise extinct tongue. Recently Great Britain suspended Malta's constitution to combat a movement to turn Malta to the Italian language in preference to English or the islanders' own unique speech.

Once Linked to Europe and Africa

Planted by fate at a strategic point on one of the world's great marine highways, this drab piece of land, less than a hundred square miles in area, has been called to fill an important rôle in the history of the world.

Malta and its satellite islands were once linked to Africa and Europe by a land bridge. With the sinking of this link, the islands were left standing like sentinels between the eastern and western basins of the Mediterranean, 58 miles from Sicily and 180 miles from Africa, near the narrowest part of the sea.

Now Malta guards the direct route from Gibraltar to Great Britain's eastern empire. Perfect harbors make it an ideal naval base. Lately it has become a hub of commercial, as well as military air traffic in the region. Besides the main island, the group comprises Gozo, Comino, the islet of Cominotto, and Filfla, a rock used by the British for naval target practice (see map, next page).

Malta has been called the stepchild, as well as the "stepping stone," of the Mediterranean. Since the dawn of its recorded history, many nationalities have ruled it, beginning with the Phoenicians and running a range which includes Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs, Normans, French, and British.

Maltese Are Handsome and Sturdy

But though always under a foreign flag, the Maltese retained their racial identity. Handsome, good-humored and sturdy, they are believed to be remnants of the great Mediterranean race which peopled the shores of this storied sea long before the rise of Greece and Rome.

Their present speech is derived from the language of the Phoenicians, whose ships more than 3,000 years ago floated in Malta's harbors as do the British men-of-war to-day. Among the upper classes and the younger generation it is being replaced by English and Italian.

Weaving a pattern of mystery over the island are deep parallel lines in the solid rock, believed to be the tracks of ancient cart wheels. Some plunge beneath an arm of the sea and reappear on the other side—testimony to the comings and goings of a people who dwelt here before the land assumed its present shape. Neolithic temples also have been found.

Christianity was brought to Malta in 58 A. D. by a castaway on its shores—the Apostle Paul. Fifteen centuries later this island, thrust out toward the East and Africa, won the name of "the shield of Christendom" when the valiant Knights of

UMI

It will require several weeks more work to complete the huge balloon bag and its metal gondola.

Two-Way Radio Hookup

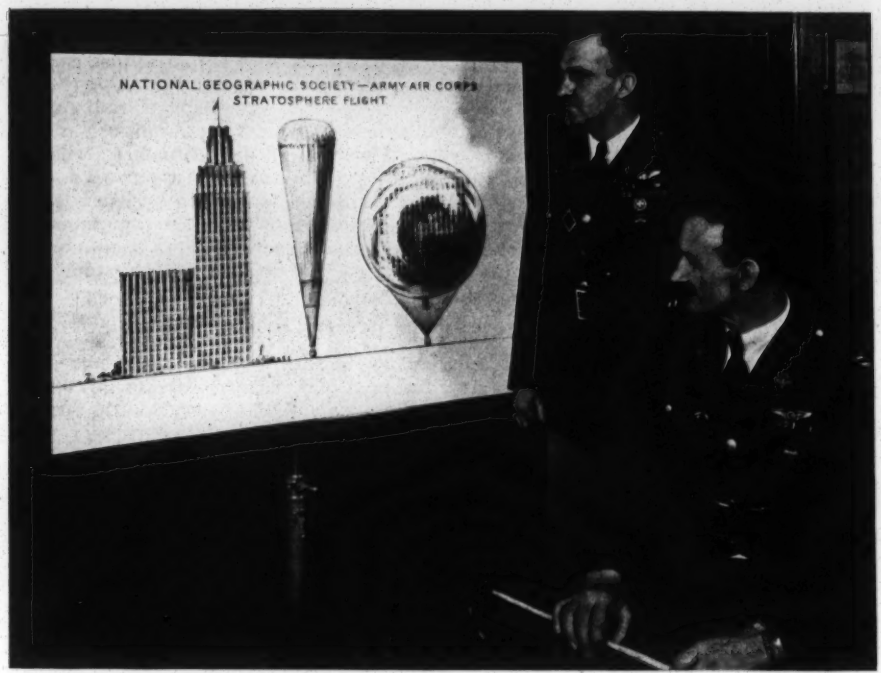
Two-way voice communication between the balloon in flight, and the headquarters of the National Geographic Society and the War Department in Washington, was assured recently when arrangements were made with the National Broadcasting Company. The broadcast will be placed on a coast-to-coast hookup for five-minute periods each hour during the progress of the flight.

The starting place of the flight and the exact date have not yet been determined, but will be announced in the newspapers later.

Note: For additional information about the flight and data about the stratosphere see: "The Geographic's Stratosphere Expedition," *National Geographic Magazine,* April, 1934; "The Aërial Conquest of Everest," August, 1933; "Ballooning in the Stratosphere," March, 1933; and "Exploring the Earth's Stratosphere," December, 1926.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "Again Man Invades the Bluish-Purple Stratosphere," week of October 23, 1933; "'Balboa of the Air' Gets Geographic Prize," week of January 29, 1934; and "National Geographic-U. S. Army Air Corps Flights To Seek Man's Ceiling," week of February 5, 1934.

Bulletin No. 2, April 30, 1934.



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THE "CREW" STUDIES A DIAGRAM SHOWING THE RELATIVE SIZE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST BALLOON

Major William E. Kepner (left) will pilot the craft and Captain Albert W. Stevens, noted aërial photographer, will act as observer and operator of the scientific equipment. At the take-off the partially inflated bag will be shaped like a carrot, its top higher above the ground than the roof of a 27-story office building. In the thin air of the stratosphere the gas will expand and distend the balloon envelope to its maximum size, a huge ball large enough to contain an 11-story hotel!

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Saluting by Gunfire an Ancient Ceremony

RECENTLY the salute market has been experiencing a mild boom. Two "booms," in fact, have been added to the courtesy salute for Governors of American States by Presidential decree. Governors visiting Army and Navy posts within their own States during 1934, and henceforth, will be entitled to 19 gun salutes, placing them on an equal footing with members of the Presidential Cabinet. Previously Governors received 17 guns.

From England comes the announcement also that the Pope is now entitled to a royal salute of 21 guns on arriving at or leaving any place in His Majesty's dominions.

Salute by gunfire is an ancient ceremony that grew out of custom and usage. Once strong nations compelled weaker ones to salute by gunfire as an act of submission. During the 17th century fine points in matters of international courtesy sometimes led to open warfare between the States of Europe.

Now Returned "Gun for Gun"

Because the earliest gunpowder greetings were largely forced affairs on parties of the second part, vessels and shore forts of stronger nations could reply to them or not as they saw fit. But custom gradually changed. With the spread of the idea of equality between nations, gunfire salutes were returned "gun for gun." This is now universal practice among civilized nations.

The most widely-used salute to-day is the International, which consists of twenty-one guns fired one after another. The ceremony and the number of guns was taken over by the United States from the British.

Why did the British choose twenty-one as the number of guns suitable for an International salute?

In the earliest days of saluting, British men-of-war fired seven guns. The number seven was taken, it is believed, because of its mystical and symbolical meaning. Among ancient nations and in the Bible seven is "The Sacred Number." Astronomy once listed seven "planets," and the phases of the moon changed every seven days. In the Bible creation was finished in seven days, and every seventh year was sabbatical.

But while early British regulations stated that ships might fire only seven guns, shore batteries were allowed three guns to every one on shipboard. It was explained that powder made from sodium nitrate spoiled on shipboard, but it was easy to keep on land. The multiple three was chosen, too, because it has had mystical and symbolical importance from remote times.

Twenty-One Guns is International Salute

When better powder was made, the salute at sea was raised to equal that on land. By common agreement to-day the International salute of all civilized nations is twenty-one guns. In the United States twenty-one guns is also the National Salute, given for the President, ex-Presidents, heads of foreign governments, members of a reigning royal family, and for the flag.

Once our National Salute was one gun for each State. First authorized in 1810, the National Salute had grown to twenty-one guns in 1818. The number of guns increased steadily with the growth of the nation, until 1841, when the National Salute was reduced to twenty-one guns.

In 1875 the United States also formally accepted twenty-one guns as the Inter-

UMI

Malta beat back the Turkish hordes. In memory of the victory the Grand Master founded Valetta, a city "built by gentlemen for gentlemen."

The Knights, their power declining, eventually were expelled by Napoleon Bonaparte who entered the harbor in 1798 on his way to Egypt. A revolt against the French garrison, combined with the assistance of the British fleet under Lord Nelson, resulted in surrender of the islands in September, 1800, and since that time they have been under British rule.

During the World War, Malta was the busy base of allied naval squadrons and the site of a huge war hospital.

One of the world's most thickly populated small islands, Malta domiciles more than 230,000 people. Strangely, it is an island without lake or stream. The soil and porous sandstones absorb the rainfall like blotting paper.

"Flower of the world" the home-loving Maltese call their island, and it is fairly fertile, although the wind threatens to blow its soil into the ocean. The first sight of it from the sea is so unimpressive as to lead some who have only seen it from afar to call it "Britain's dust heap."

Note: For descriptions and photographs of Malta and other interesting Mediterranean islands see: "The Halting Place of Nations (Malta)," *National Geographic Magazine*, May, 1920; "The Road of the Crusaders," December, 1933; "Crusader Castles of the Near East," March, 1931; "Cruising to Crete," February, 1929; "Unspoiled Cyprus," September, 1928; "Skirting the Shores of Sunrise," December, 1926; "The Geographical History of Asia Minor," November, 1922; and "From London to Australia by Aëroplane," March, 1921.

Bulletin No. 3, April 30, 1934.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Teachers renewing their subscriptions to the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS or new subscribers at this time will receive a full volume (30 issues) of the BULLETINS, including the last two issues of this term, the opening issue next fall, and continuing until a year from the date the subscription was entered. It is often impossible to supply back issues greatly desired for project or unit assignments. A lapse in subscription may be avoided by sending 25 cents (in stamps, coin or money order) for one year's subscription (30 issues) to the School Service Department, National Geographic Society.

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MALTA IS "CENTRALLY-LOCATED" IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

This tiny island group south of Sicily has played an important rôle in world history and to-day is one of England's most valued strongholds of sea and air power. The inset map shows Malta's neighbors, chief cities and the short railroad line penetrating the interior of the island.

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Tel Aviv, Palestine's All-Jewish "Boom City"

MENTION Palestine and age-old customs, tribes, and cities come to mind. Yet Palestine, like the rest of the world, is changing. Tel Aviv, a thriving modern metropolis of nearly 70,000 population, did not exist in 1909. Its site was then only a deserted area of rolling sand dunes, north of the port of Jaffa.

This month and next Tel Aviv is celebrating its 25th birthday with a big trade fair to which nine foreign nations and scores of commercial concerns have sent exhibits. The exposition, known as the Third International Levant Fair, has been given a permanent site north of the city between the Yarkon River and the Mediterranean. Last year the Levant Fair drew visitors from Syria, Egypt, Transjordan, Persia, and Iraq as well as Palestine.

Tel Aviv, Palestine's "boom city," owes its origin to a small group of Jewish residents from the distinctly-Arab city of Jaffa, who moved out to the sand dunes north of the city in 1909 and began a garden suburb.

Now Second City of Palestine

Since the World War Tel Aviv has witnessed spectacular growth. To-day this all-Jewish community, whose name means "Hill of Spring," is second in population only to Jerusalem among the cities of Palestine, and is the most modern town of the Eastern Mediterranean region. Continued Jewish immigration to Palestine, much of it from Germany, adds monthly to Tel Aviv's growing population.

With its modern homes, paved streets, shops, clubs, cafés, steamship offices and bathing beach Tel Aviv resembles a European city rather than one in Palestine. Many of its trim houses are surrounded by small gardens, preserved from drought by sprinkling systems—an unheard of extravagance so close to Jerusalem, which is often short of water even for drinking. Attractive shops display wares from many lands, while steamship offices advertise excursion rates to Europe and America on garish signboards in Hebrew and Latin characters.

At the bathing beach there is a modern Casino with jazz bands, and the sands are used for sun-bathing by men, women and children—a custom almost unknown in Palestine before the Zionists developed their own city.

Has Two Large Hebrew Libraries

The population of Tel Aviv is ultra-modern, thinking in terms of social science and business as well as advanced agriculture. The city contains over a hundred schools and kindergartens under Zionist direction, and a school of the Universal Israelite Alliance.

There are also two libraries: the Municipal Library, with a large collection of sociological works bequeathed by the late Asher Guinsberg, and the Central Library of the Cultural Committee of the Jewish Labor Federation, with nearly 100,000 volumes in Hebrew, Yiddish, and European languages, dealing with sociology and economics, science and agriculture. Hadassah health clinics (supported by American women) advise mothers about infant care and hygiene.

Tel Aviv's most spectacular holiday comes during the feast of Purim, during which horse and motor-drawn floats may combine the seven-branched candlestick and modern display advertising. A carnival spirit prevails among the noisy crowd, and young girls masquerading in heavy beards poke good-natured fun at Orthodox rabbis.

UMI

national Salute. Salutes are always fired between sunrise and sunset, and not on Sundays, except where another nation is involved.

The United States has also an extra-special ceremony known as the "Salute to the Nation," which consists of one gun for each of the 48 States. This mimic war is staged only at noon on July Fourth at American military posts and on commissioned naval vessels, although it has been given on a few other notable occasions, such as the death of a President.

Note: For additional pictures of saluting guns see: "Out in San Francisco," *National Geographic Magazine*, April, 1932; "Beyond the Grand Atlas," March, 1932; "Armistice Day and the American Battlefields," November, 1929; "Collarin' Cape Cod," October, 1925; "Across the Equator with the American Navy," June, 1921; and "Our Flag Number" also "The Story of the American Flag," October, 1917.

Bulletin No. 4, April 30, 1934.

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SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN A "GUN SALUTE"

Seagoing pets are trained to do all kinds of tricks and stunts, their sailor friends devoting many an hour to their proper education. And what foreign diplomat could fail to be impressed by the military bearing of Fido, or the complete unconcern of Tabby in her precarious cubby-hole?

A more cosmopolitan crowd than that seen during the Purim procession would be hard to find even in centuries-old communities, for here are immigrants from the Ghettos of Europe side by side with residents who have made their fortunes in America and other lands, and have followed the Zionist's dream to this sand-dune city from whose house tops one may look across the Philistine plain to the rocky backbone of old Judea.

Real Wealth Is in Oranges

The real wealth of this region is in oranges, and whole shiploads of the famous Jaffa oranges are loaded for European ports when the weather permits. Most of the new plantations have been set out by Jews, who market many of the oranges co-operatively, and are helped by the Palestine government in keeping down fruit diseases and maintaining high standards of inspection. Before the war the Jaffa orange groves shipped less than a million cases of fruit. The number is now close to three million, with a value running perhaps as high as four to five million dollars a year.

Tel Aviv also possesses Palestine's pioneer industrial plant—a brick factory which makes hundreds of thousands of silicate brick for the construction of homes of cubistic design and of other buildings for immigrants each year. It also has smaller plants turning out furniture, textiles, shoes, candies, orange cases, etc.

Note: For photographs of Tel Aviv and of modern developments in the Holy Land see: "Changing Palestine," *National Geographic Magazine*, April, 1934.

For supplementary reading and historical background see also: "The Road of the Crusaders," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1933; "Crusader Castles of the Near East," March, 1931; "Bethlehem and the Christmas Story," December, 1929; "The Pageant of Jerusalem," December, 1927; "Skirting the Shores of Sunrise," December, 1926; "Among the Bethlehem Shepherds," December, 1926; "Flying Over Egypt, Sinai and Palestine," September, 1926; "Sun-Painted Scenes in the Near East," November, 1925; "Adventures with a Camera in Many Lands," July, 1921; "From London to Australia by Aëroplane," March, 1921; "The Last Israelitish Blood Sacrifice," January, 1920; and "An Old Jewel in the Proper Setting," October 1918.

Bulletin No. 5, April 30, 1934.

Photograph by Brig. Gen. P. R. C. Groves

A WESTERN TOWN RISES IN THE JUDEAN HILLS

Modern homes and modern farming methods make their appearance in Rechovoth, one of the first and, in area, one of the largest of the Zionist colonies in Palestine. Rechovoth is about 15 miles southeast of Tel Aviv, the new Jewish metropolis near Jaffa.